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**PRESS RELEASE**

**USAID SUPPORTS WORKSHOP TO CONSERVE THE  
SUNDARBANS**

**DHAKA, MAY 24 --** Denise Rollins, Mission Director for United States Agency for International Development (USAID), spoke today at a workshop organized by the Government of Bangladesh to discuss ways the government, donor partners and the private sector can work together to conserve the wetlands and forests of Bangladesh, particularly in the Sundarbans.

In her remarks, Ms. Rollins said, “The Sundarbans is the jewel in the crown of Bangladesh’s protected area system. It is also the essence of ‘co-management,’ which brings together different government agencies, development partners, the NGO community, and more than one million Bangladeshis living on the Sundarbans borders striving to save their environment.”

Part of the USAID-funded Integrated Protected Area Co-Management (IPAC) program, the workshop was organized to create a platform for different stakeholders working in the Sundarbans to share their activities and experiences and to encourage collaboration and coordination in conserving nature where possible.

The U.S. Government, through USAID, has supported co-management for conservation in Bangladesh for more than a decade, and currently provides \$13 million through this program to conserve 25 protected forest areas and wetlands of Bangladesh through co-management – a concept that brings together the community and the government to promote transparency and accountability in conserving and managing these important natural resources.

The U.S. Government, through USAID, administers programs in five key areas in Bangladesh: improving health and pre-primary education; creating income opportunities for rural poor; supporting good governance; enhancing food security; and strengthening disaster preparedness and providing emergency assistance following natural disasters. Since 1971, the U.S. Government has provided over \$5.8 billion in assistance to Bangladesh.

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*Note: A Bangla translation of this press release is also available at the American Center. If you are interested in the translation, please call the American Center Press Section, Tel: 8837150-4, Fax: 9885688; e-mail: [DhakaPA@state.gov](mailto:DhakaPA@state.gov); Website: [http:// dhaka.usembassy.gov](http://dhaka.usembassy.gov)*